

**STATE SENATOR • VIRG BERNERO • 23RD DISTRICT**

# Bernero Press Release

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## **BERNERO TAKES AIM AT SODA POP IN SCHOOLS**

State Senator Virg Bernero (D-Lansing) today introduced legislation (SB 426) to require that schools offering soda pop to students must provide as many milk vending machines as soda pop vending machines.

“The existence of soda pop in our schools is questionable at best,” Sen. Bernero said. “In too many of our schools, soda pop is becoming the drink of choice among students -- with detrimental results to their health. Obesity, sugar diabetes and other serious health conditions are developing right under our noses. Instead of using our tax-supported schools to promote good health and nutrition, we have sold our children down a river of soda pop,” he said.

Sen. Bernero, who in the past has introduced legislation to ban soda pop from schools altogether, said this legislation has a better chance of approval. “An outright ban would be better, but at least getting milk on an equal footing with soda pop will be a great improvement,” he said. “In many of our schools there is a pop machine in virtually every corridor. It’s outrageous. We have commercialized, privatized and profitized our schools at the expense of our children’s health.”

“Kids today drink twice as much soda pop as milk, exactly the opposite of 20 years ago,” Bernero said. “In that same time frame, the number of adolescents who are considered overweight has tripled. Even more alarming, doctors are seeing increasing numbers of children with Type 2 diabetes, which usually affects much older people,” he said. “When you add osteoporosis due to inadequate calcium and dental problems from excessive sugar, it becomes quite clear that kids are drinking too much pop.”

Bernero noted that his legislation has broad, bipartisan support. “This isn’t a Democratic or Republican issue; it’s about getting our kids on the right track to live healthier lives by making smarter choices,” he said. “Studies show when milk is presented on an equal footing with pop, over 50% of students will choose calcium-rich milk,” Bernero said.

**Editor’s Note:** Sen. Bernero’s most recent photo is available for download at the following link: <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/dem/Graphics/pressphotos/SD23BerneroPortrait.jpg>

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